

## **FINAL MEETING SUMMARY**

### **HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE**

*September 3, 2014*

*Pasco, WA*

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*This is only a summary of issues and actions in this meeting. It may not represent the fullness of ideas discussed or opinions given, and should not be used as a substitute for actual public involvement or public comment on any particular topic unless specifically identified as such.*

#### **Welcome**

Liz Mattson, Public Involvement Committee (PIC) chair, welcomed the committee and led a round of introductions. Cathy McCague, EnviroIssues, said that no edits were received on the March PIC meeting summary. After Liz provided minor edits, the committee approved the summary.

#### **PIC Role Framing**

##### *Introduction*

Liz said the purpose of the discussion is address the role and value of the PIC, stemming from the recent U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) – Richland Operations (RL) Independent Assessment final results. The discussion will help inform an Executive Issues Committee (EIC) conversation about committee structure later that day. Liz reviewed previously identified roles for PIC, including:

- Review and provide input on draft public involvement materials, including Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) agencies' websites.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of TPA public involvement activities.
- Share innovative approaches to public involvement to achieve public involvement goals.

- Recommend public involvement activities.
- Thoroughly discuss and evaluate TPA agency responses to Hanford Advisory Board (Board or HAB) advice.
- Foster collaboration between the TPA agencies, Board, and the public.
- Manage expectations for how the TPA agencies engage with the Board at early opportunities.
- Identify opportunities for Board and public education outside of committee time, like evening seminars.
- Assist in increasing Board participation in meetings and committee calls, and encourage others to serve as issue managers, etc.
- Help new Board members integrate.

Liz asked PIC members to provide their opinion on the role of the PIC.

#### *Round robin*

Steve Hudson, Board chair and Hanford Watch of Oregon (Regional Environmental/Citizen), said PIC addresses issues of equity and access amongst membership. PIC's role is the bridge for information and responsible communication, serving between the general public and the TPA agencies. Integrating public involvement aspects into the technical committees may lose a few of our members who do not have technical expertise. PIC is chiefly concerned with broadening the base of public participation, which is not the focus of the technical committees. PIC is an essential contributor to the decision making process for producing advice and requires a dedicated community of participants to address the persistent needs of the general public and legal requirements of the TPA agencies. PIC also provides a strong source for institutional memory.

Gerry Pollet, Heard of America Northwest (Regional Environmental/Citizen), said the notion of eliminating PIC appears nowhere in the assessment recommendations, noting the past DOE affiliations of the assessment conductors. The TPA Quarterly Public Involvement Update is a legal requirement and is well-matched for adjoining the PIC meeting. Gerry said the TPA agencies and their public involvement activities have a poor record when it comes to addressing environmental justice, and the PIC should strive to do more, as the agencies are not currently meeting their regulated commitments to environmental justice. PIC addresses topics other committees would not, including debriefing the State of the Site (SOS) meetings. Gerry said PIC should strive to do more work in the future, not be disbanded.

Gary Garnant, Franklin and Grant Counties (Local Government), said PIC draws together ability and experience in working with the public. Explaining technical information to the public is time consuming and should be approached through a mutual gains perspective, showing what cleanup work does for both the public and the TPA agencies. The work of PIC is crucial and needs to support the interface between DOE and the public.

Steve White, Columbia Riverkeeper (Regional Environmental/Citizen), said he is concerned with environmental and cultural justice. PIC used to be more proactive in terms of being the interpreter, summarizer, and distributor of information for the lay public. It is an important role that should be continued.

Susan Leckband, Board vice-chair and Washington League of Women Voters (Regional Environmental/Citizen), said PIC provides the TPA agencies non-filtered views of a larger segment of the public and provides the opportunity for the agencies to be open and transparent to the public they serve. Until now, the Board and PIC's relationship with the agencies has been positive. PIC has an educational component that is crucial for the credibility of decisions being made at Hanford; the public represented by the Board's interest groups look to the Board to provide credibility when they have questions. PIC members are volunteers and public servants, and must not forget the reasons they, and the agencies, serve.

Ken Niles, Oregon Department of Energy (State of Oregon), said he is pleased to see a well-attended PIC meeting, with eight HAB members representing eight organizations, noting that all HAB members are PIC members. Ken said recent PIC conference calls have been poorly attended, and the committee needs to work on increasing participation. PIC is essential and is an asset for the agencies. Improvements can be made in terms of what the TPA agencies ask for and what PIC can do themselves. Over the past year, PIC tried to implement a strategic planning element that did not go as planned, but there are lessons learned. There is no other committee that would be involved in debriefing the public involvement activities, and that's one of PIC's key roles. PIC can provide help on public involvement materials and activities on more regular basis, including addressing ease of use of the website and web materials. The agencies should request PIC's help to look at the larger scope and provide feedback on nuances and different perspectives. PIC and the agencies benefit from learning what our organizations are doing to creatively engage the public, and that would be lost if PIC is disbanded.

Liz concluded the round robin by noting PIC only meets four to five times per year, in conjunction with a Board meeting, in contrast with other committees that meet on average 12 times per year.

#### *Agency Perspective*

Emy Laija, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), said the TPA agencies rely on PIC and there is no intention to disband the committee. The agencies hope PIC can use this time to reflect on how to be more efficient and make the committee better.

Madeleine Brown, Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), said she sees the PIC's role as helping the agencies approach innovative ways to engage the public, such as tactile presentation materials for addressing the Blind Alliance in the near future. The agencies welcome PIC's help on public materials and websites but need to acknowledge the tight schedules the agencies work with.

Dieter Bohrmann, Ecology, said Ecology does not support PIC being consolidated into other committees, noting the value of the PIC's input. He said it makes sense for PIC to meet, at a minimum, in conjunction with the TPA Quarterly Update.

Kris Skopeck, DOE-RL, said she welcomes PIC input but noted PIC members have not contacted her to be involved. She said she hopes to hear more from the committee and individuals in the future.

#### *Committee discussion*

*Note: This section reflects individual questions, comments, and agency responses, as well as a synthesis where there were similar questions or comments.*

- The TPA agencies could provide draft public information materials for the PIC to look through during meetings, including setting up open house materials in a format that reflects how they will be seen by the public. PIC meetings could be realigned as work sessions to provide comments and edits.
- The committee discussed how the agencies engage with PIC to ask for input, noting that communications have been sparse lately. PIC members and agency representatives will do more to open the lines of communication in the future for more active engagement on public materials. The committee asked the agencies to contact them whenever they need input.
- The committee discussed how the agencies can engage with the public on Consent Decree positions and process, noting that stakeholder engagement during negotiations is difficult but not against regulations. In the past, stakeholder meetings have been held during and after Consent Decree decisions. The agencies agreed that information will be forthcoming.
- The agencies would like to encourage more public involvement as an aspect for technical committees to consider as they work on advice. If the public component warrants further discussion, it should be addressed further by PIC. PIC intentionally plans their meetings outside of committee meeting week so PIC members can be involved in the technical committees.
- PIC finds value in identifying ongoing outreach activities members conduct on their own or with their organizations, in order to account for public involvement outside of Board meetings.

Liz will take the feedback from the committee to the EIC meeting for perspectives on committee structure.

## **State of the Site Meetings**

### *Introduction*

Ken said SOS meetings were held in April 2014 after being postponed due to the government shut down. Meetings were held in Portland and Hood River, Oregon, and Seattle and Richland, Washington. Ken noted good attendance in Portland but fewer participants in Hood River and Seattle than in recent years. 300 or more attended in Richland. EnviroIssues compiled a matrix of PIC and agency feedback on what worked, what didn't work, and future applications for SOS meetings after the May committee call. Ken noted that many of the comments are contradictory and it is hard to find consensus. Ken asked PIC to consider the comments and work toward feedback for the next iteration of meetings.

### *Committee discussion*

*Note: This section reflects individual questions, comments, and agency responses, as well as a synthesis where there were similar questions or comments.*

- While webcasts and live-streaming cannot replace certain aspects of in-person meetings, they should be considered, perhaps for a more focused topic than SOS.
- One committee member asked that agency feedback on meetings be separated from committee feedback in the future, as the answers come from disjointed perspectives. They also noted the complications and problems with the agencies' survey for SOS meeting participants, resulting in inaccurate responses. PIC could be involved in designing meeting evaluations in the future.

- The committee discussed the costs and benefits of hard-copy mailings as advertisements for public meetings, noting the significant cost, its appeal and use to different audiences, and in comparison with media ads, emails, and public flyers. Specific comments on the use of mailed notifications include:
  - The TPA listserv for email notification is growing exponentially while the mailing list is decreasing in number. Employees and contractors make up a large percentage of the mailing list, and HAB member's organizations can be asked to distribute information to their mailing lists as well.
  - Mail notifications provide better results in large cities than newspaper ads.
  - Email notifications are typically opened 20 percent of the time.
  - There are more creative ways to send mail notifications to decrease the cost and increase the attention, including the use of postcards rather than fact sheets and envelopes, and creative use of color and graphics.
  - Redundant notification (the use of media ads, email notifications, and mail notifications) increases the odds of participation, as the public is receiving multiple notifications rather than just one that is easily lost.
  - PIC members can be utilized to spread information to their communities if proper materials are provided by the agencies (e.g. flyering at a local community college).
- Public meeting notices need to include information on why the subject matter matters to the public. The SOS meeting notifications did not sufficiently convince people that the meetings are important. The agencies should consult PIC to provide input on the best methods for public notification, as well as asked to review notifications to ensure they are compelling.
- Narrow-scope topics typically attract greater participation than site-wide briefings as it is easier for the public to gage their interest and come prepared with questions. The committee noted that no matter what the topic, any significant, timely event related to Hanford will detract attention from the subject at hand. The agencies should be prepared to address any concerns that arise, even if they are off topic.
- Participants leave meetings with a better feeling of being both informed and heard if the agencies commit to responding to follow up comments, whether written or oral. The purpose of the meeting is weakened if the agencies do not demonstrate the public was heard.
- The PIC would like the agencies to commit to hosting SOS meetings annually. The agencies noted that the meetings have no set schedule and have not been discussed for Fiscal Year 2015. The committee will follow up to discuss the importance of annual SOS meetings.

## **100 F Area Proposed Plan**

### *Introduction*

Liz said the purpose of the discussion is to address any needed public involvement additions to the forthcoming Board advice on the 100 F Area Proposed Plan.

Liz said there was a public meeting for the 100 F Area Proposed Plan in July; Dieter served as facilitator and two PIC members attended. Dieter noted difficulty with the webinar component of the meeting, as

well as the sound system. The group discussed best practices for webinars and conference call components of in-person meetings, noting that it is important to set expectations for call-in participation.

#### *Committee discussion*

*Note: This section reflects individual questions, comments, and agency responses, as well as a synthesis where there were similar questions or comments.*

- Ecology and EPA guidance require DOE seek public comment on exposure scenarios used in the proposed plans. The public meeting did not explain the use of exposure scenarios, and notifications for comments have not specifically requested comments on the scenarios, Institutional Controls (ICs), and assumptions made. One committee member suggested additional language for the advice to address the lack of notification and to request the agencies specify areas for public comment. Emy noted the agencies will not be taking any more comment on the 100 F Proposed Plan and that cleanup scenarios are based on future land use.
- The committee drafted an addition to the background to note their disappointment in the insufficient public information materials on ICs, maximum exposure scenarios, and assumptions, as well as an advice point advising the agencies to provide better notice for public comment on future plans. The committee agreed to bring forward these two items to the Board meeting on Thursday.
- The committee discussed the importance of being clear about how long ICs are going to be depended on given the recent increase to 264 years, which was not clearly addressed in the 100 F Area Proposed Plan information materials or public meeting.

#### **Committee Business**

##### *HAB member self assessments*

Ken said Oregon DOE is preparing to release the 25-year edition of the Hanford Report; it will be available in October via the ODOE website.

Steve said he will be accompanying the Portland League of Women Voters on an extensive tour of the Columbia River, addressing Hanford's impacts. He asked Ken and Susan to provide presentations on Hanford 101 and the Columbia River.

Gerry said several University of Washington (UW) classes have been touring Hanford, and Ecology has assisted. Burke Museum public presentations will be resuming, and Heart of America Northwest will be hosting a public meeting at UW this fall.

Gary said he recently read DOE's proposal to the State of Washington on the Consent Decree and noted serious issues with tone. He said the document contained 40 phrases that made it sound like DOE is making excuses. He suggested PIC help review future documents for tone, as the agencies are focused on facts and not how the public will read their document.

Liz said Hanford Challenge hosted an ice cream social in August that was attended by 47 members of the public, many of whom were young people. Additional social hours will be held in fall, focused on certain Hanford topics, and featuring guest speakers.

Heather John, Ecology, spoke to the new Hanford display at the Richland Public Library that will be available through the end of September. The display covers a general overview, the history of Hanford, how the TPA works, and biology on site. A 45-minute slideshow shows on loop. The Washington Department of Health loaned some historic and modern air sampling equipment for the display. Heather noted the display provides handouts and speaks to both adults and children. She encouraged PIC members to visit the display if in the area. She asked the PIC to provide feedback on the display for future improvement.

John Howieson, Physicians for Social Responsibility (Local/Regional Public Health), said he presented on Hanford for an environmental conference in Portland that was subsequently used in a news story seen by a number of people in the area.

Kris said the Hanford Speaker's Bureau has received a lot of requests lately and will be busy into the fall. She noted the number of requests from Oregon.

Madeleine said Ecology will be hosting another round of trivia on Facebook and Twitter in October, incorporating Hanford history.

Cathy reminded the agencies to provide information on upcoming events for the weekly email, HAB Events-at-a-Glance.

#### *Develop the committee's three-month work plan*

Cathy said the EIC meeting will better inform the committee's work plan, suggesting PIC wait until October to update their plan. She noted November 4 is the placeholder for the next in-person meeting, pending approval of the 2015 HAB calendar on Friday. She noted that Board meetings will be moving to a Wednesday-Thursday format to accommodate a four-day workweek on site, so PIC meetings will be moved to Tuesday.

#### *Upcoming conference calls / Follow up items*

Cathy reviewed follow-up items for the committee, noting that Ken and Liz will start working on the committee work plan once the agencies provide their 3-month interim work plan to the EIC.

The committee will have a call in October and a meeting in November.

The meeting was adjourned.

#### **Attachments**

Attachment 1: Draft Advice: 100 F Area Proposed Plan

Attachment 2: Transcribed Flip-chart Notes

## Attendees

### Board Members and Alternates

Gary Garnant	Susan Leckband	Gerry Pollet
John Howieson	Liz Mattson	Steve White
Steve Hudson	Ken Niles	

### Others:

Kristin Skopeck, DOE-RL	Dieter Bohrmann, Ecology	Melissa Thom, EnviroIssues
Yvonne Levardi, DOE-ORP	Madeleine Brown, Ecology	Cathy McCague, EnviroIssues
Jason Chudy, DOE-ORP	Heather John, Ecology	Emily Bays, Hanford Challenge
Emy Laija, EPA	Sharon Braswell, North Wind Group	Peggy Maze Johnson, Heart of America Northwest
	Mark McKenna, MSA	